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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [PHUM](#) [PE](#)  
SUBJECT: HUMALA HAS NO COATTAILS IN LORETO

REF: A. 05 LIMA 4197

- [1](#)B. 05 LIMA 3415
- [1](#)C. 05 LIMA 3414
- [1](#)D. LIMA 1220
- [1](#)E. LIMA 1765

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Summary:  
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[1](#)1. (C) Ex-Union por el Peru (UPP) and Peruvian Nationalist Party (PNP) presidential candidate Ollanta Humala carried the Loreto Region in Peru's 6/4 second-round presidential race. Despite that, Loreto remains up for grabs in November's regional and municipal elections because Humala's party has no infrastructure there. The Evangelical-based political party Restauracion Nacional (RN) is making a strong push in Loreto and other jungle areas. Because RN competes directly with Humala's base among poor Peruvians (the so-called C, D and E groups), the new party could become a stumbling block to Humala's efforts to elect his own candidates in regions he carried on 6/4. To stop Humala, however, RN may have to ally with other parties, something that could be difficult for a group with an overtly moral message and a desire to distinguish itself from traditional politics. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (U) Poloff traveled to Iquitos, the capital of the Loreto Region, June 20-23, and interviewed a variety of local leaders on the political situation, including: Regional President Robinson Rivadeneyra, Mayor Juan Carlos de Aguila (APRA), Congressman-elect Jose Vargas Fernandez (APRA), Archbishop Julian Garcia Centeno, Director of the Local Teachers College Ludolfo Ojeda, Restauracion Nacional national strategist Fernando Bellido, and Director of Human Rights for the Prefecture's Office (a branch of the Ministry of Interior) Jaime Soplin Perea.

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Humala Has No Coattails/No Organization  
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[1](#)3. (C) Despite Humala's victory in Loreto in the 6/4 presidential race (Humala beat APRA Party President-elect Alan Garcia 53-47 percent in Loreto), the former UPP/PNP candidate has no/no strong organization in the region. The two parties that supported him maintain separate headquarters and reportedly have tense relations with one another. A variety of local observers stated that Loreto's voters supported Humala because he was an available protest vehicle, not out of conviction. Archbishop Julian Garcia Centeno underscored the similarity between Humala's success in Loreto and that of President Toledo four years earlier. Toledo

carried Loreto with 70 percent of the vote in 2001, but his popularity locally plunged to ten percent just one year later, according to Garcia Centeno, when he had not come through with his campaign promises. Humala's only chance to elect candidates, observers agreed, would be to ally with one of the local Loreto "defense fronts," one of which, the United for Loreto movement (UNIPOL), now controls the regional presidency.

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Evangelical Party Follows "Jungle Strategy"  
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¶4. (C) Peru's upstart Evangelical-led political party, Restauracion Nacional (RN), which proved a surprise in the recent 4/9 first-round elections, is working hard in Iquitos (Refs A-E). According to RN national strategist Fernando Bellido, RN is following a "jungle strategy," pushing solid candidates in jungle regions (Loreto, Ucayali, Amazonas) where conversion to Evangelical Protestantism as well as poverty rates are relatively high. (In Loreto, 20-25 percent of the population is Evangelical, according to both Protestant and Catholic leaders.) RN maintains an impressive office in Iquitos where volunteers are working well into the night analyzing electoral statistics from Loreto's smallest settlements. RN's people are concentrating on organizing in areas where null votes constituted a significant percentage of ballots cast. Overall, in Loreto about 30 percent of voters cast null votes during Peru's 6/4 presidential race.

¶5. (C) While Bellido saw the jungle areas as RN's natural territory, he maintained the party could compete in other areas, even in places where Humala ran up big victory margins in the south. He mentioned Arequipa as one area where Evangelicals had been "awakened" by RN candidate Humberto Lay's relatively strong showing in the 4/9 first-round presidential elections. He also noted that RN was weighing possible alignments with other parties to elect good candidates. During the visit, APRA Congress representative-elect Juan Vargas said that RN should ally with APRA in the coming regional elections. RN's highly disciplined vote, observers emphasized, would be an ideal supplement to any established political party and would likely guarantee a win for such a coalition.

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Comment: Lessons in Loreto?  
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¶6. (C) Loreto is, in one sense, an unusual area. The region is physically isolated from the rest of Peru and local sympathies in favor of autonomy run high. That said, the factors at play here -- political fragmentation at the local level and the absence of any strong organization for Humala -- are likely not unique. Humala's goal is to capture a number of regional governments in the areas he carried in the election -- the jungle regions and the sierras and the south -- and create a solid bloc opposed to Garcia. If conditions in Loreto are any indication, however, this strategy may be difficult to implement. Humala could take Loreto by lining up with a regional defense front like UNIPOL, but such a move, while it could give him victory, would also tie him to notoriously independent local leaders with their own agendas.

¶7. (C) RN's effort in Loreto bears watching. Party members' experience in church outreach appears to transfer to politics. RN may have to cross the Rubicon and form electoral alliances, however, if it wants to win: something that may be difficult for a party that defines itself as different from its more traditional competitors. The key may be in how these alliances are defined. Bellido told Poloff that RN would be disposed to support good candidates in conjunction with other parties, but would not engage in traditional electoral "pacts" that involved binding long-term obligations. End Comment.

¶8. (C) Embassy plans to send reps into other pro-Humala

regions in the coming weeks to take the measure of Humala's organizational depth in these areas with an eye toward November's regional and municipal elections.

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